

say of myself like the famous Italian general, who being asked in his old age why he was always victorious, replied, it was because he had always been beaten in his youth.

To the Duke, of Wellington.

[Jan. 7, 1835.]

I have fought our battle and I have lost it by a majority of 14.¹ Had Lord Carrington exerted himself even in the slightest degree in my favour I must have been returned; but he certainly maintained a *neutrality* — a neutrality so strict that it amounted to a blockade. . . . Grey made a violent anti-Ministerial speech, and I annihilated him in my reply; but what use is annihilating men out of the House of Commons. . . . I am now a cipher; but if the devotion of my energies to your cause, *in and out*, can ever avail you, your Grace may count upon me, who seeks no greater satisfaction than that of serving a really great man.²

From the Duke of Wellington.

Jan. 10, 1835.

The Duke of Wellington presents his compliments* to Mr. Disraeli, and has received his letter of Wednesday night, for which he is much obliged. He very much regrets the result of the election at Wycombe.

The failure of this third attempt at Wycombe seems finally to have convinced Disraeli that he could not hope for a political career unless he definitely identified himself with one or other of the two great parties ; and there could no longer be any doubt as to which he would choose. The formation of the Peel Government entirely changed the problem for him, and thousands of others who were still unsettled in their political allegiance. When he published his Wycombe speech of December 16 as a pamphlet, he told Austen that he was acting by 'the Minister's desire'; and if Peel read the speech at all he could hardly have failed to read it with approval. On

¹ This does not agree with the figures given above, but those were the days of open voting, and Disraeli may have written before the final figures were available.

² Maxwell's *Life of Wellington*, II., p. 305.